

Opportunities for Small Businesses at the Department of Energy

Dear LATINA Style Magazine:

I am proud to report that the Department of Energy (DOE) has an active Small Business Program that maximizes contracting opportunities for small businesses. To assist in the development of a viable departmental small business program, I have appointed Theresa Alvillar-Speake as the Director of the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity. Ms. Speake, who also heads the Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization, is the first Hispanic woman to hold that position.

In early October 2002, I issued a "Policy Statement on Supporting Small Businesses in Implementing DOE Missions" in support of President Bush's Small Business Agenda. The Statement highlights the importance of a) ensuring that Government contracts are open to all small businesses that can supply the Government's needs and b) avoiding unnecessary bundling of government contracts. The Department continues to establish and implement strategies to support the national small business initiatives.

The Department annually establishes small business goals, and every quarter it monitors the achievement of these goals. The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization reviews acquisitions in excess of \$3 million that are not set aside for small business concerns. In addition, facility management contracts are reviewed annually to determine if portions can be set aside for small business consideration.

In order to ensure that the Department maintains a pool of diverse suppliers, products and services are procured from minority-owned, women-owned, small disadvantaged, HUBZone, and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. Outreach efforts in support of small businesses include an annual conference, sponsored by the Department, that brings together government, industry, and small businesses to exchange information on contracting and subcontracting opportunities with the DOE.

The Department conducts programs, such as the Mentor-Protégé and 8(a) Pilot Programs, which offer opportunities for eligible small businesses to receive contracting and subcontracting opportunities with the Department's program elements and major prime contractors. These partnerships between the DOE and businesses can become long-term relationships.

A number of additional initiatives have been implemented to promote small business contracting and subcontracting, including a provision in the Department's major solicitations that requires the successful offeror to maintain a relationship with a protégé throughout the life of the contract. Large prime contractors play a major role in providing opportunities to small businesses to perform departmental requirements.

The Department makes every effort to ensure that its contracts are unbundled and available for small business participation. If you are a small-business owner looking for a contract, consider the Department of Energy. We are working for your business.



Spencer Abraham

Secretary, The Department of Energy